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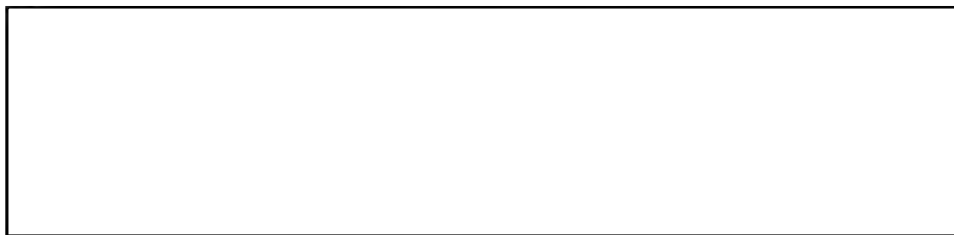
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SOUTH VIETNAM: The three major battlefronts are fairly quiet as both sides prepare for further action.

Hue was somewhat calmer yesterday following some 36 hours in which public order largely collapsed in the downtown area of the city. President Thieu visited the city to confer with military commanders and to help improve morale. He expressed confidence about the general military situation.

The new commander in the northern provinces, General Truong, has told South Vietnamese soldiers in the Hue area to return to their units or be shot, and there are reports that he has sent armored personnel carriers and military police into the streets. Earlier in Saigon, Thieu had also issued a strong statement condemning disorders in the cities and calling for harsh measures by local authorities.

Nevertheless, Vietnamese remaining in Hue apparently are extremely apprehensive about the situation there, and few are optimistic about the near-term outlook. The restoration of public order, however, and the fact that there has been little direct enemy pressure against the city in the past few days have given the city a respite. It will be largely up to General Truong to use the respite to pull together the city's defenses.

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GUATEMALA: Partisan maneuvering is overtaking violence as the way to succeed in politics.

Political activists, weary of the bloodletting of the past two years, are turning more to party organization, probing for possible alliances, and testing the luster of their leaders. With President Arana almost midway through his term, incidents of political violence have dropped to less than 60 a month, only a third of the rate last year. Security forces still employ their scatter-shot approach to the terrorist problem, but they have nailed a few important subversives recently and have the guerrillas on the run or in hiding. Both the government and Communist Party deny it, but a modus vivendi is strongly suggested by the release from jail of important Communists. [REDACTED]

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The political climate eased perceptibly after the lifting of the year-old state of siege last November failed to produce the spectacular terrorist actions that were widely feared. The government was able to hold, and to win handily, the municipal elections in March. The major rightist party and Arana's organizational base, the Nationalist Liberation Movement, is in far the best shape as the parties enter the shakedown phase preliminary to the presidential campaign. Its would-be standard bearer, Mario Sandoval, however, poses a one man threat to the process of political normalization, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] candidacy might spur the now highly fragmented center and left into a coalition of convenience for the 1974 elections. This, in turn, could help revive legitimate politics. [REDACTED]

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NOTES

JORDAN-USSR: The Soviets have agreed in principle to a visit by King Husayn but have requested that the King delay his trip for some months, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] While the King has not revealed his motives in seeking an invitation to visit the USSR, he probably had hoped to obtain Soviet backing for his West Bank federation proposal and to secure some protection from radical Arab diatribes. Moscow is clearly concerned over Egyptian and fedayeen negative reaction to such a visit, however, and has been stalling the King for some time. Moreover, although the Soviets have not rejected the King's West Bank proposal, the violent rejection of it by the other Arab states will make Soviet support difficult. [REDACTED]

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* * * *

TURKEY: Leftist terrorists are stepping up their attacks in a desperate effort to gain the release of the three condemned terrorist leaders whose execution appears imminent. In the latest incident, the gendarmerie commander and three others were wounded by three assailants yesterday in a kidnaping attempt. One terrorist was killed, another was arrested, and one escaped. Other recent terrorist acts include the bombing of the Turkish Airways office in Stockholm yesterday and the hijacking of a Turkish DC-9 the day before during a flight from Ankara to Istanbul. Similar attacks probably will occur intermittently. An armed forces alert yesterday probably was prompted by the increased terrorist activity and may be a precursor to the executions. [REDACTED]

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LIBYA: The government and Western oil companies have agreed to raise the posted price of Libyan crude oil by 8.49 percent to offset losses caused by the devaluation of the US dollar. After a series of contentious sessions since January, the Libyans apparently accepted the same settlement that the Persian Gulf members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries had reached last January. Libya's agreement is retroactive to 20 January and should yield about \$170 million in additional revenue this year. Now that the problem of parity adjustment is settled, the Libyans can turn their attention to the more complex issue of participation.

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